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TAXATION IN THE AMIRATE OF MECCA DURING THE MEDIEVAL PERIOD

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The amirate of Mecca was established by sharifs of Ḥasanid ancestry in the middle of the fourth century A. H./tenth century A.D. The territory traditionally under its direct control included the holy city of Mecca and its immediate hinterland, the nearby hill town of Ṭā'if, and the Red Sea port of Jedda. In addition, the sharifs often exercised a tenuous hold over certain tribal areas in the Sarāt Mountains south of Ṭā'if, as well as the coastal plain south of Jedda, known as the Tihāma.[1]

The amirate was poor in resources. Industry was extremely limited, while agriculture was practised on a very small scale. As a consequence, Mecca was largely dependent on the regular import of basic foodstuffs, and especially cereal grains, from the Yemen, East Africa, and, principally, Egypt.[2] Trade, on the other hand, was the economic activity *par excellence* in the amirate, being centred in Mecca and Jedda.

During the Fāṭimid and Ayyūbid eras, Jedda gradually developed into a commercial entrepôt of signal importance on the maritime trade route linking the ports of the west coast of India with Egypt, and ultimately, the whole Mediterranean basin.[3] The volume of this trade increased dramatically during the eighth/fourteenth century, in the Mamlūk period.[4]

Although the amirs of Mecca profited from the beneficence of the rulers of the regional great powers in Iraq, the Yemen and Egypt, who, through outright cash payments, salaries, stripends and payments in kind, sought to secure the loyalty of the often querulous sharifs and maintain the safety and security of the pilgrim routes to the Hijaz, the primary source of income for the sharifs was the revenue derived from taxation. Although taxation in Mecca took a variety of forms, the most important one was the levy on merchandise arriving in Mecca and Jedda from the Yemen and India, as the ninth/fifteenth-century Mamlūk chancery official al-Qalqashandī so clearly states.[5]

The taxes on merchants' inventories levied by the amir of Mecca were but one example of a number of taxes subsumed under the general rubric *maks* (pl. *mukūs*), a word specifically used to denote a tax for which no sanction

[1] For the geographical extent of the amirate of Mecca during the medieval period, cf. Shihāb al-Dīn Abū 'l-'Abbās Aḥmad b. 'Alī al-Qalqashandī, *Subh al-a'shā fī ṣinā'at al-inshā* (Cairo, 1910–20), IV, 255–60; Muḥammad b. 'Abd Allāh al-Idrīsī, *Nuzhat al-mushtāq fī ikhtirāq al-āfāq* (Naples, 1965–77), II, 138–9; al-Iṣṭakhrī, *Kitāb al-Masālik wa'l-mamālik*, 2nd. ed. (Leiden, 1967), 19; Muḥammad b. 'Abd Allāh b. Baṭṭūṭa, *Tuḥfat al-nuẓẓār fī gharā'ib al-amṣār wa 'ajā'ib al-asfār* (Beirut, 1964), 164.

[2] cf. my article, 'Maṣādir al-tamwīn al-ghidhā'ī li-imārat Makka, 358/969–923/1517', *Majallat Kulliyyat al-Ādāb–Jāmi'at al-Malik Su'ūd*, XII, no. 1, 1985, 193–219; idem, 'Prices in Mecca during the Mamlūk Period', *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient*, XXXII, 1989, 288–93; Hassan Mohammed El-Hawary and Gaston Wiet, *Matériaux pour un Corpus Inscriptionum Arabicarum*, part 4, *Arabie, Inscriptions et Monuments de la Mecque: Ḥaram et Ka'ba*, I, fasc. 1 (Cairo, 1985), 171–81.

[3] The development of commerce in the amirate of Mecca has been discussed in my monograph, *al-Aḥwāl al-siyāsiyya wa'l-iqtiṣādiyya bi-Makka fī'l-'aṣr al-Mamlūkī* (Riyadh, 1985), 173–93; idem, 'Prices', 293–9.

[4] The reasons for this increase are considered in Wilhelm von Heyd, *Histoire du commerce du Levant au Moyen-Âge*, 2nd. ed. (Leipzig, 1923), II, 443–5; Ahmed Darrag, *L'Égypte sous le règne de Barsbay* (Damascus, 1961), 195–200: J. C. Garçin, *Un centre musulman de la Haut-Égypte mediévale: Qūṣ* (Cairo, 1976), 420–5; Na'īm Zakī Fahmī, *Ṭuruq al-tijāra al-dawliyya wa maḥaṭṭātuhā bayn al-sharq wa'l-gharb fī awākhir al-'uṣūr al-wusṭā* (Cairo, 1973), 125–6, 133, 137–9.

[5] al-Qalqashandī, *Ṣubḥ*, IV, 276.

exists in Islamic law. Because of the extra-legal character, of these levies, their abolition came to be looked upon as an act of particular religious merit by Muslim rulers.[6]

In the amirate of Mecca, at least three other varieties of *mukūs*—other than the customs duties—can be found. Muslims coming to Mecca to perform the pilgrimage were required to pay a special tax; duties were collected on foodstuffs sold in the markets of Mecca; and tribesmen owing loyalty to the sharif of Mecca were—during certain periods—required to make cash payments to him as a mark of their allegiance. Taken *in toto*, the revenue from these taxes came to constitute the major proportion of the income of the amir. This development can be traced back to the early years of the Meccan sharifate during the Fāṭimid era, and culminated during the Mamlūk period. In addition to tracing the nature, importance and development of taxation in the amirate of Mecca during the medieval period, I will attempt to show that the increasing revenue accruing to the sharifs from their taxation policies was one of the factors which precipitated direct Mamlūk intervention in the Hijaz during the first half of the ninth/fifteenth century, when the amirate of Mecca was transformed into a Mamlūk dependency.

Despite the scant information available to us, it seems probable that some, if not all, of the varieties of *mukūs* mentioned above, made their appearance in the Hijaz soon after the foundation of the amirate of Mecca by the Sharif Ja'far b. Muḥammad in *c.* 357/968. Precedents for the exaction of at least one tax can be found in the history of the few decades prior to that event. Thus, al-Ṣūlī, a contemporary author, informs us that the Iraqi pilgrimage caravan was permitted to pass through territory under the control of the Qarāmiṭa of Baḥrayn in Eastern Arabia in 327/939 only after payment of protection money fixed at five dinars per baggage camel, three dinars per camel bearing a litter (*maḥmil*), and one dinar per donkey. This is said to be the first occasion on which a *maks* was demanded from pilgrims to Mecca.[7]

The geographer al-Muqaddasī, describing the amirate of Mecca during the first two decades of its existence, notes that customs duties (termed *mukūs*) were already being levied—presumably on behalf of the amir of Mecca—in Jedda on trade goods, including comestibles. A tax, in cash or kind, was levied on imports of wheat at the rate of a half dinar per load plus one measure taken from each of the two sacks borne by every pack animal. In addition, three dinars were levied on each basket of cloth from Shaṭwā, two dinars on each basket of Daybaq cloth, and two dinars on each load of wool.[8]

In 442/1050, the Persian traveller Nāṣir-i Khusrū arrived in Mecca for the pilgrimage; he noted that Jedda was under the direct control of the sharifs of Mecca, and that taxes were collected there from pilgrims coming from Egypt.

[6] For a discussion of the meaning and development of the term *mukūs* during the Mamlūk period, cf. al-Qalqashandī, *Ṣubḥ*, III, 459, 464–7; Taqī'l-Dīn Aḥmad b. 'Alī al-Maqrīzī, *Kitāb al-Sulūk li-ma'rifat duwal al-mulūk* (Cairo, 1956–73), I, 267, n. 4; idem, *al-Mawā'iẓ wa'l-i'tibār bi-dhikr al-khiṭaṭ wa'l-āthār* (Cairo, 1270 A.H.), I, 103–7; II, 121; El-Hawary and Wiet, *Matériaux*, 161, 171ff.; Muḥammad Labīb al-Batanūnī, *al-Riḥla al-Hijāziyya* (Cairo, 1329 A.H.), I, 69–70; Muḥammad Qandīl al-Baqlī, *al-Ta'rīf bi-muṣṭalaḥāt Ṣubḥ al-a'shā* (Cairo, 1983), 325; Ḥilmī Muḥammad Sālim, *Iqtiṣād Miṣr al-dākhili wa anẓimatuhu fī'l-'ahd al-Mamlūkī* (Alexandria, n.d.), 286–94; Ibrāhīm 'Alī Ṭarkhān, *al-Nuẓum al-iqṭā'iyya fī'l-sharq al-awsaṭ fī'l-'uṣūr al-wusṭā* (Cairo, 1968), 505–9; 'Abd al-Mun'im Mājid, *Nuẓum dawlat salāṭīn al-Mamālīk wa rusūmuhum fī Miṣr*, 2nd. ed. (Cairo, 1979), I, 72–4; art. 'Maks', *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd. ed.

[7] Abū Bakr Muḥammad b. Yaḥyā al-Ṣūlī, *Akhbār al-Rāḍī wa'l-Muttaqī bi-Allāh* (Cairo, 1935), 136; Jamāl al-Dīn Abū 'l-Maḥāsin Yūsuf b. Taghrī Birdī, *al-Nujūm al-zāhira fī mulūk Miṣr wa'l-Qāhira* (Cairo, ?–1972), III, 264; Gaston Wiet, 'Un decret du sultan mamlouk Malik Achraf Sha'bān à la Mecque', in *Mélanges Louis Massignon* (Paris, 1957), III, 402.

[8] Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Muqaddasī, *Aḥsan al-taqāsīm fī ma'rifat al-aqālīm*, 2nd. ed. (Leiden, 1967), 104–5.

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al-Qabādiyānī, Arabic transl. by Aḥmad Khālid a
[10] Taqī al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Fās
(Cairo, 1959–69), VII, 33–34.
[11] 'Izz al-Dīn 'Alī b. Muḥammad b. al-Athīr,
[12] al-Idrīsī, *Nuzha*, II, 135.
[13] ibid., II, 139.
[14] ibid., II, 138.
[15] Najm al-Dīn Abū Muḥammad 'Umāra al-Y
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Although this is the earliest available indication known to us of the collection of a *maks* from Muslim pilgrims after the establishment of the Meccan sharifate, Nāṣir-i Khusrū speaks of it as already being a well-established practice. He himself was exempted from paying the duty, and the governor of Jedda wrote to the amir of Mecca explaining that it was not proper to demand the payment of such a tax from a learned man.[9]

The practice of exacting payments from pilgrims continued after the fall of the Ja'farid line of the Ḥasanid sharifs and the succession of the collateral branch of the Hawāshim in 454/1062. Qāsim b. Muḥammad, Sharif of Mecca from 487/1094 to 518/1124–25 levied taxes on pilgrims arriving in his territories.[10] His son and successor, Fulayta, repealed the *mukūs* collected from the inhabitants of Mecca, probably a tax on foodstuffs.[11] It is unclear whether the duty on pilgrims was also annulled at the same time.

The geographer al-Idrīsī (d. 556/1160) furnishes us with valuable information regarding taxation in the amirate of Mecca during his lifetime. So important was the tax levied on pilgrims to Mecca that the process of its collection came to be initiated outside Arabia. Pilgrims from Egypt and North Africa were assessed in the Egyptian Red Sea port of 'Aydhāb. Only those persons who were able to produce the required fee—eight gold dinars—were allowed to continue their journey across the Red Sea to Jedda, where the agents of the Hāshimid amir of Mecca collected the duties for their master. Despite these precautions, some pilgrims managed to cross the Red Sea from 'Aydhāb without having given proof of their ability to pay the *maks* in Jedda. Severe punishments were meted out to such individuals as well as to the captains of the vessels who dared to transport them, in flagrant contravention of the orders of the amir of Mecca. Al-Idrīsī further elaborates that the pilgrim tax was the most important source of revenue for the amir of Mecca, 'as his sources of income are limited, and his revenues do not cover his needs and the salaries of his supporters'.[12]

Elsewhere, al-Idrīsī notes that the collection of customs duties from merchants in the port of Jedda was among the most important responsibilities of the agent of the amir of Mecca there.[13] Because many of the cargo vessels plying the Red Sea used to stop at the port of al-Sirrayn, south of Jedda on the Tihāma coast, the amir of Mecca was careful to bring it under his control. During al-Idrīsī's time, one-half of the duties collected from vessels arriving at al-Sirrayn was despatched to the amir of Mecca, while the local ruler retained the other half for himself.[14]

In 556/1160–61, the Fāṭimid vizier Ṭalā'i' b. Ruzzīk convinced the sharif of Mecca to accept a payment of approximately 15,000 dinars in lieu of the duties customarily levied on Egyptian pilgrims, but for a period of one year only.[15]

Such measures were only temporary palliatives; the evidence shows that the rulers of Mecca became increasingly more demanding in their taxation policies towards the end of the Fāṭimid period, a time when traditional Egyptian largesse towards the Hijaz was sharply curtailed. The sharifs' dependence on revenues derived from taxation increased proportionally. In order to counteract

[9] Abū Mu'īn al-Dīn Nāṣir Khusrū al-Qabādiyānī al-Marwazī, *Safar-nāma: riḥlat Nāṣir Khusrū al-Qabādiyānī*, Arabic transl. by Aḥmad Khālid al-Badalī (Riyadh, 1983), 135–6.

[10] Taqī al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Fāsī, *al-'Iqd al-thamīn fī tārīkh al-Balad al-Amīn* (Cairo, 1959–69), VII, 33–34.

[11] 'Izz al-Dīn 'Alī b. Muḥammad b. al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil fī'l-tārīkh* (Beirut, 1965–66), x, 617.

[12] al-Idrīsī, *Nuzha*, II, 135.

[13] ibid., II, 139.

[14] ibid., II, 138.

[15] Najm al-Dīn Abū Muḥammad 'Umāra al-Yamanī, *al-Nukat al-'aṣriyya fī akhbār al-wuzarā' al-Miṣriyya* (Challon, 1897), 53.

this trend, Ṭāshtakīn al-Mustanjadī, the commander of the Iraqi pilgrimage caravan in 571/1176, made his appointment of Dā'ūd b. 'Īsā as amir of Mecca contingent on the abrogation of all the *mukūs* levied by the sharifs.[16]

If the *mukūs* were indeed abrogated in 571/1176, some if not all of them must have been restored immediately after the departure from Mecca of the Iraqi official. The evidence for this lies in Saladin's annulment of the tax levied on pilgrims travelling to Mecca from Egypt, which occurred in 572/1176–77.

Saladin's initiative was praised by the Moroccan traveller Ibn Jubayr, who passed through 'Aydhāb en route to the holy cities of the Hijaz in 579/1183.[17] He remarked that the tax in question amounted to 7.5 Egyptian dinars per head. As a form of compensation for the income he stood to lose, Saladin granted the amir of Mecca an annual stipend in cash and kind, equivalent to 2,000 dinars and 2,000 *irdabbs* of wheat, in addition to the revenues of certain lands in Upper Egypt and the Yemen.[18] In certain years, the stipend was delayed; such was the case in 579/1183, when Ibn Jubayr arrived in Jedda. Mukaththir b. 'Īsā, the amir of Mecca, refused to permit the pilgrims to proceed to Mecca until they had sworn to pay the equivalent of the former pilgrim tax, in case the stipend did not reach Jedda in time, for which he was severely castigated by Ibn Jubayr, who accused the sharif of acting as if Mecca were his personal fief.[19]

Al-Qalqashandī has preserved the text of a letter sent to the amir of Mecca by Saladin, in response to a letter from the sharif, in which he acknowledged the receipt of a shipment of grain sent from Egypt, part of the annual compensation for the abrogated taxes. In his letter, Saladin promised to double the annual shipment of grain to Mecca if the amir of Mecca would annul all the varieties of *mukūs* levied in the amirate of Mecca.[20]

Saladin is reported to have taken the initiative of abolishing the pilgrim tax and providing the amir of Mecca with a fixed and dependendable income upon the recommendation of one of the '*ulamā*' of Aleppo, a shaykh 'Alwān. When the shaykh reached Jedda on his way to Mecca for the pilgrimage, he was met by one of the amir of Mecca's subordinates, who demanded the payment of the customary tax. Shaykh 'Alwān refused to comply, but, since he was a respected man of learning, he was granted an audience with the Sharif Mukaththir, who proceeded to justify his taxation of pilgrims, on the grounds that he was otherwise unable to meet the expenses of his government, due to the lack of a viable alternative source of income. This message was duly passed on to Saladin by shaykh 'Alwān, whereupon the sultan decided to abolish the *maks* in question, and to ensure that it would not be introduced once again, by providing a reliable source of income for the amir of Mecca and his successors.[21]

16 al-Fāsī, '*Iqd*, IV, 355–6; idem., *Shifā' al-gharām bi-akhbār al-Balad al-Ḥarām* (Cairo, 1956), II, 198.

17 Muḥammad b. Aḥmad b. Jubayr, *Tadhkira bi'l-akhbār 'an ittifāqāt al-asfār* (Cairo, 1968), 55.

18 ibid., 69. One *irdabb* is equivalent to 90 litres; cf. Richard T. Mortel, 'Weights and measures in Mecca during the Late Ayyūbid and Mamlūk periods', in R. B. Serjeant and R. L. Bidwell (ed.), *Arabian Studies* (University of Cambridge Oriental Publications, 42, Cambridge, 1990), 178. Al-Maqrīzī (*Sulūk*, I, 264) gives the compensation as 2000 dinars and 1000 *irdabbs* of wheat plus the revenues from lands in Egypt and the Yemen. Sibṭ Ibn al-Jawzī, Yūsuf b. Quzāoghlū, *Mir'āt al-zamān fī tārīkh al-a'yān* (Hyderabad, 1952), VIII, 338, maintains that it amounted to 8000 *irdabbs* of wheat alone, and he is supported by Abū Shāma al-Muqaddasī, Shihāb al-Dīn Abū Muḥammad 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. Ismā'īl, *Kitāb al-Rawḍatayn fī akhbār al-dawlatayn* (Cairo, 1287–88 A.H.), II, 3–4; and Ibn Taghrī Bardī, *Nujūm*, VI, 78. Ibn al-Mujāwir, Jamāl al-Dīn Abū 'l-Fatḥ Yūsuf b. Ya'qūb gives a figure of 4–6000 *irdabbs* of wheat in *Tārīkh al-mustabṣir* (Leiden, 1951), I, 42.

19 Ibn Jubayr, *Tadhkira*, 69.

20 al-Qalqashandī, *Ṣubḥ* VII, 109–10.

21 'Abd al-Qādir b. Muḥammad al-Anṣārī al-Jazīrī, *al-Durar al-farā'id al-munaẓẓama fī akhbār al-ḥājj wa ṭarīq Makka al-Mu'aẓẓama* (Riyadh, 1983), III, 816–17; Aḥmad b. Zaynī Daḥlān, *Khulāṣat al-kalām fī bayān umarā' al-Bayt al-Ḥarām* (Cairo, 1304 A.H.), 21.

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In spite of this precaution, the ta
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646/1249; in order to forestall any
action, Ibn al-Musayyib removed the
al-Manṣūr's decree from the Ka'ba.[26]

The Rasūlid bid for supremacy in
contested by the Mamlūk Sultan
667/1268–69, an opportunity arose for
in Mecca. At the time, the amirate
Muḥammad Abū Numayy and his u
of Baybars's designs on the Hijaz, and
for himself, drove Idrīs out of Mecca a
his action by claiming that his uncle
the Rasūlids of the Yemen. Baybars, in
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annual stipend of 20,000 dirhams, th
abolish all the *mukūs* in Mecca.[27]

Although Abū Numayy may have
Mamlūk payroll, it is doubtful whether

22 Ibn al-Athīr, *Kāmil*, XII, 401; al-Fāsī, '*I*
al-Malik b. Ḥusayn al-'Iṣāmī, *Simṭ al-nujūm al-*
IV, 212–13.

23 Ibn al-Mujāwir, *Mustabṣir*, I, 49.

24 The struggle between the Ayyūbids of Egy
Mecca has been discussed in detail in G. R. Smit
(London, 1978); Mortel, *Aḥwāl*, 46–50; Garçin,
121, 123–7.

25 Badr al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Ḥātim al-Yām
min al-Ghuzz bi'l-Yaman (London, 1974), 220–1;
fī tārīkh al-dawla al-Rasūliyya (Cairo, 1911–14),

26 al-Yāmī, *Simṭ*, 234–5; al-Khazrajī, '*Uqūd*, I,

27 al-Fāsī, '*Iqd*, I, 459; al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk*, I, 57

ıe commander of the Iraqi pilgrimage
nent of Dā'ūd b. 'Īsā as amir of Mecca
mukūs levied by the sharifs.[16]
d in 571/1176, some if not all of them
after the departure from Mecca of the
in Saladin's annulment of the tax levied
Egypt, which occurred in 572/1176–77.
he Moroccan traveller Ibn Jubayr, who
e holy cities of the Hijaz in 579/1183.[17]
amounted to 7.5 Egyptian dinars per
the income he stood to lose, Saladin
stipend in cash and kind, equivalent to
t, in addition to the revenues of certain
n.[18] In certain years, the stipend was
33, when Ibn Jubayr arrived in Jedda.
cca, refused to permit the pilgrims to
rn to pay the equivalent of the former
t reach Jedda in time, for which he was
accused the sharif of acting as if Mecca

ext of a letter sent to the amir of Mecca
m the sharif, in which he acknowledged
ıt from Egypt, part of the annual com-
his letter, Saladin promised to double
a if the amir of Mecca would annul all
nirate of Mecca.[20]
the initiative of abolishing the pilgrim
with a fixed and dependendable income
he '*ulamā*' of Aleppo, a shaykh 'Alwān.
ıis way to Mecca for the pilgrimage, he
cca's subordinates, who demanded the
ch 'Alwān refused to comply, but, since
was granted an audience with the Sharif
his taxation of pilgrims, on the grounds
t the expenses of his government, due to
of income. This message was duly passed
ereupon the sultan decided to abolish the
it would not be introduced once again,
ncome for the amir of Mecca and his

gharām bi-akhbār al-Balad al-Ḥarām (Cairo, 1956),

ira bi'l-akhbār 'an ittifāqāt al-asfār (Cairo, 1968), 55.
itres; cf. Richard T. Mortel, 'Weights and measures
k periods', in R. B. Serjeant and R. L. Bidwell (ed.),
Oriental Publications, 42, Cambridge, 1990), 178.
tion as 2000 dinars and 1000 *irdabbs* of wheat plus
nen. Sibṭ Ibn al-Jawzī, Yūsuf b. Quzāoghlū, *Mir'āt*
VIII, 338, maintains that it amounted to 8000 *irdabbs*
āma al-Muqaddasī, Shihāb al-Dīn Abū Muḥammad
ayn fī akhbār al-dawlatayn (Cairo, 1287–88 A.H.), II,
bn al-Mujāwir, Jamāl al-Dīn Abū 'l-Fatḥ Yūsuf b.
eat in *Tārīkh al-mustabṣir* (Leiden, 1951), I, 42.

al-Jazīrī, *al-Durar al-farā'id al-munazzama fī akhbār*
adh, 1983), III, 816–17; Aḥmad b. Zaynī Daḥlān,
-Ḥarām (Cairo, 1304 A.H.), 21.

In 597/1200–1201, the line of sharifs known as the Hawāshim was overthrown by Qatāda b. Idrīs, himself a Ḥasanid sharif belonging to a parallel branch of the family. During the first decade of his 20-year reign, Qatāda appears to have refrained from the imposition of taxes not specifically sanctioned by Islamic law. This situation abruptly changed soon after an unsuccessful assassination attempt on Qatāda in 608/1212. Soon thereafter, Qatāda restored the *mukūs* levied in Mecca to the levels where they had been during the reigns of his predecessors, and even increased a number of them, a policy which engendered widespread popular discontent in Mecca.[22] On the other hand, Qatāda probably did not revive the pilgrim tax abolished by Saladin, although his contemporary Ibn al-Mujāwir claims that he contemplated doing so shortly before his death.[23]

Al-Malik al-Manṣūr Nūr al-Dīn 'Umar b. 'Alī b. Rasūl, the founder of the Rasūlid dynasty of the Yemen (626/1229–858/1454) succeeded in wresting control of the amirate of Mecca from the Ayyūbids of Egypt in 629/1232. The Rasūlid conquest of Mecca proved to be short-lived, and effective control of the amirate alternated between the Rasūlids and the Ayyūbids for the following two decades.[24] In 639/1242, when al-Malik al-Manṣūr himself reimposed Rasūlid hegemony over Mecca, he took the initiative of annulling all the *mukūs* exacted by the Ḥasanid sharifs, a measure probably designed to gain the support of the inhabitants of the amirate. So as to symbolize the permanence of his gesture, al-Malik al-Manṣūr ordered the text of the decree to be carved on a stone tablet which was then affixed to the Ka'ba itself.[25]

In spite of this precaution, the taxes in question were soon reimposed by al-Malik al-Manṣūr's own deputy, Muḥammad b. Aḥmad b. al-Musayyib, in 646/1249; in order to forestall any possible protest over the legality of his action, Ibn al-Musayyib removed the stone tablet bearing the text of al-Malik al-Manṣūr's decree from the Ka'ba.[26]

The Rasūlid bid for supremacy in the Hijaz was soon thereafter vigorously contested by the Mamlūk Sultan of Egypt, Baybars al-Bunduqdārī. In 667/1268–69, an opportunity arose for Baybars to establish a Mamlūk foothold in Mecca. At the time, the amirate was being ruled jointly by the Sharif Muḥammad Abū Numayy and his uncle Idrīs. The former, aware no doubt of Baybars's designs on the Hijaz, and aspiring to gain control of the amirate for himself, drove Idrīs out of Mecca and wrote to the sultan in Cairo justifying his action by claiming that his uncle had intended to deliver Mecca over to the Rasūlids of the Yemen. Baybars, in return for Abū Numayy's acknowledgement of Mamlūk influence in Mecca manifested in the recitation of Baybars's name and titles during Friday prayers in the Great Mosque, granted him an annual stipend of 20,000 dirhams, the sole condition being that the sharif abolish all the *mukūs* in Mecca.[27]

Although Abū Numayy may have been gratified by his inclusion in the Mamlūk payroll, it is doubtful whether he took any immediate action to repeal

[22] Ibn al-Athīr, *Kāmil*, XII, 401; al-Fāsī, *'Iqd*, VII, 53–54; al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk*, I, 175; 'Abd al-Malik b. Ḥusayn al-'Iṣāmī, *Simṭ al-nujūm al-'awālī fī anbā' al-awā'il wa'l-tawālī* (Cairo, n.d.), IV, 212–13.

[23] Ibn al-Mujāwir, *Mustabṣir*, I, 49.

[24] The struggle between the Ayyūbids of Egypt and the Rasūlids of the Yemen for control of Mecca has been discussed in detail in G. R. Smith, *The Ayyubids and early Rasulids in the Yemen* (London, 1978); Mortel, *Aḥwāl*, 46–50; Garçin, *Qūṣ*, 133–6; El-Hawary and Wiet, *Matériaux*, 121, 123–7.

[25] Badr al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Ḥātim al-Yāmī, *al-Simṭ al-ghālī al-thaman fī akhbār al-mulūk min al-Ghuzz bi'l-Yaman* (London, 1974), 220–1; 'Alī b. al-Ḥasan al-Khazrajī, *al-'Uqūd al-lu'lu'iyya fī tārīkh al-dawla al-Rasūliyya* (Cairo, 1911–14), I, 68–9; al-Fāsī, *'Iqd*, VI, 346–7.

[26] al-Yāmī, *Simṭ*, 234–5; al-Khazrajī, *'Uqūd*, I, 77–8; al-Fāsī, *'Iqd*, I, 386–7.

[27] al-Fāsī, *'Iqd*, I, 459; al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk*, I, 579.

the most profitable of the *mukūs* levied in Mecca, namely, the pilgrim tax. Later in the same year, 667/1269, Baybars arrived in Mecca to perform the pilgrimage. At the very beginning of his sojourn there, the sultan extracted an oath from Abū Numayy in which he promised not to levy any duties on pilgrims or merchants travelling to Mecca via the Egyptian and Syrian pilgrim roads, viz. from territories under Mamlūk control. The oath was intended to be binding not only on Abū Numayy himself, but on all his successors as well, 'until the day of judgement'.

Because of the high rates of taxation imposed on them by the amir of Mecca, the flow of pilgrims from Syria and Egypt had declined considerably during the period prior to Baybars's visit.[28] Abū Numayy levied a tax of 50 dirhams on each camel arriving in Mecca with the Egyptian pilgrimage caravan, versus only 30 dirhams on the same basis for the Yemeni pilgrimage caravan. In spite of his oath, al-Maqrīzī maintains that Abū Numayy did not abolish the pilgrim tax, although he did reduce the sum demanded of Egyptian pilgrims from 50 to 30 dirhams per camel.[29]

Later, after the death of Baybars, Abū Numayy restored the various *mukūs* previously levied in the amirate of Mecca, a move which prompted the Mamlūk Sultan Qalā'ūn to despatch a contingent of 300 *mamlūk* horsemen along with the commander of the Egyptian pilgrimage caravan in 683/1284, 'Alam al-Dīn Sanjar al-Bāshqurdī.[30] Through a show of military force, Qalā'ūn sought to persuade Abū Numayy to repeal the objectionable imposts, although there is no evidence to show that this objective was indeed achieved.

On the contrary, the *mukūs* continued to play a predominant role in the finances of the amirate of Mecca. The North African pilgrim, al-Tujībī, who arrived in Jedda on his way to Mecca in 696/1397, has left us a valuable account of the extra-legal taxes being exacted there on behalf of the amir of Mecca, Abū Numayy. Each pilgrim was forced to surrender one-fourth of any cereal grains in his possession to the agent of the Grand Sharif. In addition, an unspecified impost was levied on any trade goods he may have brought with him to sell in the Hijaz. Finally, another duty was paid whenever a pilgrim rented a camel to carry him onward to Mecca. Remarkably, al-Tujībī adopted a supportive attitude towards the taxation policy of the sharifs.[31]

After the death of Abū Numayy in 701/1301, Mamlūk intervention in the internal affairs of the amirate of Mecca began to increase markedly in response to the progressive degeneration in the sharifian government due to the appearance of rival factions fighting to gain control of the amirate.[32] At times, rival sharifs sought to gain the approbation and support of the Mamlūk administration in Cairo by a selective annulment of *mukūs*. Thus, when the commander of the Egyptian pilgrimage caravan, Baybars al-Jashnakīr, deposed the co-amirs of Mecca, 'Uṭayfa and Abū 'l-Ghayth, the sons of Abū Numayy, and replaced them by their brothers Ḥumayḍa and Rumaytha, in an attempt to restore a degree of internal stability to Meccan politics, the two new co-amirs immediately proceeded to repeal a number of taxes.[33]

[28] al-Najm 'Umar b. Fahd, *Itḥāf al-warā bi-akhbār Umm al-Qurā* (Jedda, n.d.), III, 96; al-Jazīrī, *Durar*, I, 602.

[29] al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk*, I, 724.

[30] ibid., al-Jazīrī, *Durar*, I, 608.

[31] al-Qāsim b. Yūsuf al-Sabtī al-Tujībī, *Mustafād al-riḥla wa'l-ightirāb* (Tunis, 1975), 219–20.

[32] The political history of Mecca during the eighth/fourteenth century, including the gradual internal destabilization of the amirate and the increasing Mamlūk intervention has been discussed in Mortel, *Aḥwāl*, 65–118; idem, 'Zaydī Shi'ism and the Ḥasanid Sharifs of Mecca', *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, XIX, 1987, 462–8; Garçin, *Qūṣ*, 203–4; El-Hawary and Wiet, *Matériaux*, 142–3, 144–6, 149.

[33] al-Fāsī, *Shifā'*, II, 243; idem, *'Iqd*, IV, 234, 405, 406.

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[34] The amirate of Madina was ruled by shar
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Ḥusaynid amirate of Madīna to the end of th
63–78; idem, 'The Ḥusaynid amirate of Madī
(forthcoming).
[35] al-Fāsī, *'Iqd*, VI, 97; al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk*, II,
[36] al-Fāsī, *'Iqd*, VI, 97. Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalān
wheat was repealed; cf. *Inbā' al-ghumr bi-anbā*
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purposes) on Mecca and Madina; cf. Ibrāhīm b.
al-amṣār (Cairo, 1893), II, 31; Sharaf al-Dīn
al-bilād al-Miṣriyya (Cairo, 1898), 193.
[37] cf. Mortel, 'Prices', 294–8, and the source
[38] al-Fāsī, *'Iqd*, III, 396; VI, 62.

As Mamlūk involvement in Meccan political life increased, so did the sultans' efforts aimed at suppressing the extra-legal impositions of the Meccan amirs. Such attempts were often accompanied by compensation of a more or less permanent nature. During his second pilgrimage to Mecca in the year 719/1320, Sultan al-Malik al-Nāṣir Muḥammad b. Qalā'ūn abolished all the *mukūs* levied in both Mecca and Madina.[34] In order to provide the sharifs of the two holy cities with a viable alternative source of income, the sultan awarded them revenues from lands in Egypt and Syria, to be disbursed annually.[35]

The sharifs of Mecca frequently obstinately defied the sultans' edicts and reimposed some or all of the *mukūs*. Only two years after al-Nāṣir Muḥammad's abrogation of these taxes, they had reappeared in Mecca. After the sultan's wife, Ṭughay, returned to Cairo from her pilgrimage to Mecca, she exerted her influence on her husband to persuade him to take further action vis-à-vis the *mukūs*. Consequently, in 722/1322, al-Nāṣir Muḥammad annulled the tax on foodstuffs in Mecca, while presumably permitting the other *mukūs* to continue. In return, he granted the amir of Mecca, 'Uṭayfa b. Abī Numayy, two-thirds of the revenue from the town of Damāmayn in Upper Egypt.[36] It is unclear if the sharif continued to collect the revenues awarded to him by the same sultan in 719/1320.

During the second half of the eighth/fourteenth century, the role of the taxes levied on merchandise passing through the port of Jedda gradually grew in importance, along with the volume of trade passing through the port. The rise in the commercial importance of Jedda beginning in this period can be attributed to two main factors—the decline of the Egyptian Red Sea port of 'Aydhāb, and the decline of the overland route via Iraq and Iran following the collapse of the Īlkhānate.[37]

In 750/1349, the Sharif 'Ajlān b. Rumaytha was involved in a power struggle in Mecca with his brother Thaqaba. Eventually, 'Ajlān won the support of the Mamlūk Sultanate and became sole amir of Mecca, while Thaqaba began to raid Jedda, so as to interfere with the flow of revenue from the customs duties to Mecca. For a short time, Thaqaba actually won control of Jedda, and proceeded to exact heavy customs duties from the Yemeni merchants. These duties took the form of cash payments, in addition to a percentage of the merchandise carried in the merchants' vessels, which included cloth, silk and slaves.[38]

The situation within the amirate of Mecca continued to deteriorate until the commander of the Egyptian pilgrimage caravan, Ṭaybughā al-Majdī, appointed 'Ajlān and Thaqaba as co-amirs in 752/1352. Needless to say, this arrangement entailed a division of the revenues levied in Jedda between the two brothers. In the following year, however, the Sharif 'Ajlān confiscated all the customs revenues in Jedda and refused to hand over the required

[34] The amirate of Madina was ruled by sharifs of Ḥusaynid ancestry, and was founded in the middle of the fourth/tenth century; cf. Richard T. Mortel, 'The origins and early history of the Ḥusaynid amirate of Madīna to the end of the Ayyūbid period', *Studia Islamica*, LXXIV, 1991, 63–78; idem, 'The Ḥusaynid amirate of Madīna during the Mamlūk Period', *Studia Islamica* (forthcoming).

[35] al-Fāsī, *'Iqd*, VI, 97; al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk*, II, 197; Ibn Taghrī Birdī, *Nujūm*, IX, 59.

[36] al-Fāsī, *'Iqd*, VI, 97. Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī maintains that only the tax levied on the sale of wheat was repealed; cf. *Inbā' al-ghumr bi-anbā' al-'umr* (Cairo, 1969–72), II, 322. Two Mamlūk fiscal handbooks from the ninth/fifteenth century mention Damāmayn as a *waqf* (for unspecified purposes) on Mecca and Madina; cf. Ibrāhīm b. Muḥammad b. Duqmāq, *al-Intiṣār li-wāsiṭat 'iqd al-amṣār* (Cairo, 1893), II, 31; Sharaf al-Dīn Yaḥyā b. al-Jī'ān, *al-Tuḥfa al-saniyya bi-asmā' al-bilād al-Miṣriyya* (Cairo, 1898), 193.

[37] cf. Mortel, 'Prices', 294–8, and the sources cited in n. 67.

[38] al-Fāsī, *'Iqd*, III, 396; VI, 62.

share to his brother, a situation which led to further destabilization in the Hijaz.[39]

Political and economic conditions in the amirate of Mecca continued to deteriorate during the next few years. As a result of a dispute between ʿAjlān, the amir of Mecca, and the Rasūlid sulṭān of the Yemen, al-Malik al-Mujāhid ʿAlī, the latter forbade Yemeni merchants from travelling to Jedda and Mecca in 753/1352, intending thereby to cripple the Sharif ʿAjlān. The effects of the Yemeni embargo were soon felt in Mecca, and ʿAjlān, in a desperate attempt to raise badly needed revenue, levied a tax of two to four dirhams on every date palm in Wādī Marr, in the vicinity of Mecca, in 755/1354–55.[40]

At various times during the eighth/fourteenth century, the Mamlūk authorities in Egypt took measures to repeal the taxes levied on foodstuffs in Mecca. The repetition of such edicts provides clear evidence of Mamlūk inability to enforce their will effectively. Thus, although al-Nāṣir Muḥammad repealed the tax on foodstuffs in Mecca in 722/1322, as has already been seen, and provided the sharifs with an alternative source of revenue, in 760/1359, the *mamlūk* amir Jaraktamur al-Mārdīnī, the commander of the Egyptian pilgrimage caravan, is said to have once again abolished the taxation of foodstuffs in Mecca.[41]

This measure was also destined to fail, as is eloquently demonstrated by the decree of Sultan al-Malik al-Ashraf Shaʿbān, dated 766/1365,[42] repealing a variety of *mukūs*. In order to ensure a degree of permanence for his decree, the sultan had three copies of it carved on columns in the Great Mosque at Mecca, but even this was insufficient to prevent the eventual reinstitution of the abrogated taxes, as the sharifs of Mecca would simply cover up the inconvenient texts with a coating of plaster, thus rendering them illegible.[43]

Sultan al-Ashraf Shaʿbān's decree proclaimed the immediate annulment of all the taxes levied in Mecca on food and drink, whether of local provenance or imported from outside the amirate. For clarity's sake, and so as to add further emphasis, the text of the decree goes on to list a number of items which would henceforward become duty-free, including wheat, several varieties of millet, sorghum, chickpeas, rice, lentils, barley, flour, fruits, dates, grapes, watermelons, vegetables, honey, prepared foods and salt, as well as the meat of camels, sheep and cows.[44]

The inclusion of a list of specific items clearly implies that taxes had until then been levied on them in the markets of Mecca. The Meccan historian al-Fāsī has provided us with detailed information regarding the rate of taxation. Two Meccan *mudds*[45] were taken from each camel-load[46] of cereal grains arriving in Mecca via Jedda, and 1.25 *mudds* from each camel-load coming from Ṭā'if. In addition, a duty of three or eight Masʿūdī dinars was exacted from each camel-load of dates arriving at Mecca, depending on their quality.

[39] al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk*, II, 887.

[40] al-Fāsī, *ʿIqd*, VI, 64–5, 171; ʿUmar b. Fahd, *Itḥāf*, III, 262–3.

[41] al-Fāsī, *ʿIqd*, II, p. 142; Jamāl al-Dīn Abū 'l-Maḥāsin Yūsuf b. Taghrī Birdī, *al-Manhal al-Ṣāfī wa'l-mustawfī baʿd al-wāfī*, MS Cairo: Dār al-Kutub al-Miṣriyya, no. 1113 *tārīkh*, III, f. 212a.

[42] This decree has been the subject of a thorough study by Gaston Wiet, cf. 'Decret'. More recently, cf. El-Hawary and Wiet, *Matériaux*, 155–89. Ibn Taghrī Birdī ascribes the abolition of these *mukūs* to the amir Yalbughā and dates it to 767/1365–6. This assertion is patently erroneous, in light of extant dated inscriptions containing the text of the edict in question; cf. *Nujūm*, XI, 34. The decree is also mentioned in al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk*, III, 98; ʿUmar b. Fahd, *Itḥāf*, III, 303–4; Darrag, *Barsbay*, 224.

[43] al-Batanūnī, *Riḥla*, 97.

[44] El-Hawary and Wiet, *Matériaux*, 155.

[45] The Meccan *mudd* is equivalent to $\frac{1}{40}$ of the Meccan *ghirāra*, or 2.3–2.8 litres, depending on the value chosen for the volume of the *ghirāra*, cf. Mortel, 'Weights', 180.

[46] The measure intended is the *ḥiml*, approximately 244 kg: cf. Mortel, 'Weights', 182.

Later, one Masʿūdī dinar was ad
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ʿAjlān b. Rumaytha swore a s
by all the provisions of the sultan
in Mecca and Madina, and also in
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more than 60 years later.[51]
In 774/1372–73, the Sharif ʿAjl
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Ḥasan b. ʿAjlān took measures design
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[47] al-Fāsī, *Shifā'*, II, 249.
[48] El-Hawary and Wiet, *Matériaux*, 155.
[49] ibid., 155–6.
[50] ʿUmar b. Fahd, *Itḥāf*, III, 303.
[51] al-Fāsī, *Shifā'*, II, 250.
[52] al-Fāsī, *ʿIqd*, VI, 69–70; ʿUmar b. Fahd,
[53] al-Fāsī, *ʿIqd*, III, 95.
[54] ibid., VI, 210; ʿUmar b. Fahd, *Itḥāf*, III, 3

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Dār al-Kutub al-Miṣriyya, no. 1113 *tārīkh*, III, f. 212a.
ıorough study by Gaston Wiet, cf. 'Decret'. More
, 155–89. Ibn Taghrī Birdī ascribes the abolition of
: to 767/1365–6. This assertion is patently erroneous,
g the text of the edict in question; cf. *Nujūm*, XI, 34.
lūk, III, 98; ʿUmar b. Fahd, *Itḥāf*, III, 303–4; Darrag,

the Meccan *ghirāra*, or 2.3–2.8 litres, depending on
ra, cf. Mortel, 'Weights', 180.
oximately 244 kg: cf. Mortel, 'Weights', 182.

Later, one Masʿūdī dinar was added to the price of every basket of dates sold in the marketplace. Six Masʿūdīs were levied on every sheep sold in Mecca.[47]

The tax demanded of pilgrims upon their arrival in the port of Jedda was also abolished, as were similar levies on pilgrims travelling by the land route to Mecca. Several sorts of *mukūs* were, however, not affected by this decree, such as the tax on the sale of horses, or the customs duties levied on Iraqi merchants and Kārimī merchants of the Yemen.[48]

So as to compensate the sharifs for the revenue lost to them due to the promulgation of this edict, an annual grant of 160,000 dirhams to the amir of Mecca from the Mamlūk treasury was ordained.

The final section of al-Ashraf Shaʿbān's decree consists of strict admonitions, both to the reigning amir of Mecca, ʿAjlān b. Rumaytha, and to his successors, not to attempt to contravene the decree in any way, as well as strongly worded curses and maledictions upon whoever might possess the audacity to tamper with its provisions.[49]

ʿAjlān b. Rumaytha swore a solemn oath in which he promised to abide by all the provisions of the sultan's edict; copies of this oath were preserved in Mecca and Madina, and also in the citadel at Cairo. For his part, the sultan issued a document awarding the sharif the stipulated financial compensation,[50] which continued to be disbursed regularly at least until the time of al-Fāsī, more than 60 years later.[51]

In 774/1372–73, the Sharif ʿAjlān transferred the reins of power in Mecca to his son Aḥmad. One of the conditions agreed to by the new amir was that his father remain the sole beneficiary of the annual stipend mentioned in al-Ashraf Shaʿbān's edict.[52] This presumably remained the case until ʿAjlān's death three years later.

Aḥmad b. ʿAjlān continued to rule the amirate of Mecca until his death in 788/1386. He seems to have profited from his policy of encouraging trade in the amirate, and he undertook to stabilize relations between his administration and the merchant community. One aspect of this policy was the regularization of the customs duties levied on trade goods in Jedda on a basis acceptable to all parties. Furthermore, his generosity towards his agents in Jedda reduced the incidence of graft and corruption, while the liberality he displayed to his sharifian cousins reduced their inclination to interfere with the smooth flow of trade goods between Jedda and Mecca.[53]

This policy appears to have continued during the reign of ʿAlī b. ʿAjlān (789/1387–797/1395), as the volume of trade passing through the port of Jedda continued to increase. Thus, when a number of merchant vessels ran aground on coral reefs near Jedda in 794/1392, the Sharif ʿAlī refrained from levying any duty on the merchandise which was salvaged and transported to Mecca for sale.[54]

It was during the long and pivotal reign of the Sharif Ḥasan b. ʿAjlān (798/1395–818/1415; 819/1416–829/1426) that the volume of merchandise carried on the India trade passing through Jedda increased dramatically. Initially, Ḥasan b. ʿAjlān took measures designed to promote this trade, thereby increasing the revenues collected by his agents. At the very end of his reign, however,

[47] al-Fāsī, *Shifā'*, II, 249.
[48] El-Hawary and Wiet, *Matériaux*, 155.
[49] ibid., 155–6.
[50] ʿUmar b. Fahd, *Itḥāf*, III, 303.
[51] al-Fāsī, *Shifā'*, II, 250.
[52] al-Fāsī, *ʿIqd*, VI, 69–70; ʿUmar b. Fahd, *Itḥāf*, III, 319.
[53] al-Fāsī, *ʿIqd*, III, 95.
[54] ibid., VI, 210; ʿUmar b. Fahd, *Itḥāf*, III, 385.

Ḥasan b. ʿAjlān grossly miscalculated, failing to understand the ambitions of the financially-strapped Mamlūk administration in Cairo vis-à-vis the Red Sea trade. As a result, not only was the amirate of Mecca incorporated into the Mamlūk domains, but the taxes formerly collected by the sharif's agents in Jedda were, beginning in 828/1425, expropriated *in toto* by the sultan.

One of the first actions taken by Ḥasan b. ʿAjlān was—in 799/1396–97—to encourage the Yemeni merchants to unload their cargoes in the port of Jedda once again. During the preceding two years, the majority of them had chosen to by-pass Jedda, travelling instead to Yanbuʿ, northwards up the west coast of Arabia, because of the chaotic political circumstances prevailing in the amirate of Mecca stemming from the rivalry between Ḥasan b. ʿAjlān and his brother ʿAlī. In order to persuade the Yemeni merchants to return to Jedda, the Sharif Ḥasan reduced the taxes collected on the merchandise they carried by one-third. At the same time, he maintained the security of the caravan route between Jedda and Mecca which was frequented by both pilgrims and merchants. The result was a marked increase in Ḥasan b. ʿAjlān's income.[55]

A year later, in 800/1397–98, the Sharif Ḥasan arrested a group of slaves belonging to certain sharifs who had attempted to interfere with the flow of customs duties to the amir's coffers by deflecting the merchant vessels to an unspecified port south of Jedda and collecting the duties for themselves.[56] At the same time, he paid the amount of 70,000 dirhams to a group of Ḥasanid sharifs in return for their promise not to interfere with the flow of merchandise and duties between Mecca and Jedda.[57]

When Ḥasan b. ʿAjlān learned of the intention of a group of followers of the Ḥasanid sharifs to raid the Yemeni merchants along the Jedda–Mecca route, he himself accompanied them, along with the amir of the Egyptian pilgrimage caravan.[58]

Ḥasan b. ʿAjlān's positive policy towards the Yemeni merchants was quick to bear fruit. In 802/1399–1400, more than ten large vessels docked at Jedda, where the customs duties—assessed at the rate of 10 per cent of the value of the goods involved—reached previously unheard of levels.[59]

The dramatic increase in the value of the customs duties permitted Ḥasan b. ʿAjlān to annul a number of *mukūs* levied on tribes of the Hijaz, as well as duties demanded by the sharifs' slaves from caravans passing through Wādī Nakhla in the vicinity of Mecca. The text of the sharif's decree in this regard, dated 805/1402–1403, was engraved on one of the columns of the Great Mosque of Mecca.[60]

Part of Ḥasan b. ʿAjlān's success in promoting Jedda as a way-station on the Red Sea sector of the India trade route must be attributed to a large extent to his choice of deputy in the port, Jābir b. ʿAbd Allāh al-Ḥarāshī. Originally himself a merchant, al-Ḥarāshī entered the service of the amir of Mecca who appointed him as his representative in Jedda in 806/1403–1404 and granted him wide-ranging powers over trade and tariffs. Al-Ḥarāshī proved to be extremely successful and sought to develop Jedda along the line of the southern Yemeni port of Aden. Furthermore, he laid down strict guidelines for the levies

[55] al-Fāsī, *ʿIqd*, IV, 90; ʿUmar b. Fahd, *Ithāf*, III, 401, 404.
[56] al-Fāsī, *ʿIqd*, IV, 92; ʿUmar b. Fahd, *Ithāf*, III, 408.
[57] ʿUmar b. Fahd, *Ithāf*, III, 407.
[58] al-Fāsī, *ʿIqd*, IV, 94; ʿUmar b. Fahd, *Ithāf*, III, 415.
[59] al-Fāsī, *ʿIqd*, IV, 95; ʿUmar b. Fahd, *Ithāf*, III, 420; Emmanuel Piloti de Crète, *L'Égypte au commencement du* XV*e* *siècle d'après le Traité d'Emmanuel Piloti de Crète* (Cairo, 1950), 42.
[60] El-Hawary and Wiet, *Matériaux*, 198.

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exacted on behalf of the Ḥasanid sharifs as a whole, and prevented them from harassing the merchants who frequented the port.[61]

One of the greatest threats to the safety of the merchants in Jedda and Mecca, as well as the route between them, came from the slaves of the sharifs, evidently a sizeable and—quite frequently—uncontrollable group. In 815/1412–13, they exacted heavy customs duties of their own from the merchants accompanying the Yemeni pilgrimage caravan, and Ḥasan b. ʿAjlān was powerless to prevent them.[62]

Then, in 816/1413–14, Ḥasan b. ʿAjlān was confronted with a revolt led by his nephew, Rumaytha b. Muḥammad b. ʿAjlān. In the violence that ensued, the Hijazi merchant community did not go unscathed; they were particularly affected by Rumaytha's plunder of Jedda in Ramaḍān 816/November–December 1413.[63] As a result, a large number of Yemeni merchants by-passed Jedda—presumably in favour of Yanbuʿ—in the following year.[64] Although Ḥasan b. ʿAjlān and Rumaytha b. Muḥammad arranged a temporary ceasefire in 817/1414, and Rumaytha agreed that the Jedda customs receipts would be the sole right of the Sharif Ḥasan,[65] the trading season that year was a failure, and Ḥasan b. ʿAjlān, faced with a severe financial crisis, was constrained to extort large sums of money from several prominent Meccan merchants.[66] During the pilgrimage season of the same year, 817/1414, the Iraqi pilgrimage caravan departed Mecca earlier than usual; its leaders feared that the Sharif Ḥasan would attempt to make up for his losses by levying taxes on the caravan.[67]

It was not long before stability once again returned to the Hijaz, and merchants vessels once again docked in the port of Jedda. In 819/1416, the Sharif Ḥasan and his closest associates collected a total of 13,200 gold *mithqāls* in customs duties in Jedda.[68] And as a further incentive to the Yemeni merchants to unload their cargoes in Jedda rather than Yanbuʿ, in 821/1418 Ḥasan b. ʿAjlān reduced the rate of the customs duties collected by his agents in the port. He was so anxious to attract the Yemeni trade that he even went so far as to apologize to the merchants for levying any *maks* on their merchandise whatsoever, pleading his lack of revenue from other sources.[69] Given the obvious success of his policy vis-à-vis the Yemeni merchants, Ḥasan b. ʿAjlān continued to take an active role in the business of the port, and began to rely less upon his deputies for major decisions. It also appears that the amount of duty collected on any given occasion was open to negotiation between the amir of Mecca and the merchant community, rather than being levied according to a fixed rate, as had hitherto been the case. Thus, when the vessels of the Yemeni *kārimī* merchants arrived in Jedda in 822/1419, Ḥasan b. ʿAjlān collected the substantial sum of 10,000 *iflūrīs* from their owners, a figure arrived

[61] al-Fāsī, *ʿIqd*, IV, 100–11; ʿUmar b. Fahd, *Itḥāf*, III, 435–6. Al-Ḥarāshī remained in the service of Ḥasan b. ʿAjlān for only three years, after which he was removed from his position when he became too powerful in the eyes of the sharif; cf. his biography in al-Fāsī, *ʿIqd*, III, 400–3; Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Sakhāwī, *al-Ḍawʾ al-lāmiʿ li-ahl al-qarn al-tāsiʿ* (Beirut, n.d.), III, 51.
[62] al-Fāsī, *ʿIqd*, IV, 117.
[63] ibid., IV, 116; ʿUmar b. Fahd, *Itḥāf*, III, 506.
[64] Badr al-Dīn Maḥmūd al-ʿAynī, *ʿIqd al-jumān fī tārīkh ahl al-zamān*, MS Cairo: Dār al-Kutub al-Miṣriyya, no. 1584 *tārīkh*, XXV, f. 415.
[65] al-Fāsī, *ʿIqd*, IV, 118; ʿUmar b. Fahd, *Itḥāf*, III, 515.
[66] al-Fāsī, *ʿIqd*, IV, 120; ʿUmar b. Fahd, *Itḥāf*, III, 524.
[67] al-Fāsī, *Shifāʾ*, II, 257.
[68] al-Fāsī, *ʿIqd*, IV, 122; ʿUmar b. Fahd, *Itḥāf*, III, 530–1.
[69] al-Fāsī, *ʿIqd*, IV, 128; ʿUmar b. Fahd, *Itḥāf*, III, 555.

at only after deliberation.[70] In the following year, 2,000 dinars (perhaps *iflūrīs* are also to be understood here) were collected from just one vessel of the Yemeni *kārimī* merchants.[71]

The customs duties from the port of Jedda were not the sole type of *mukūs* collected by the Sharif Ḥasan during this period. Taxes on food items in Mecca—supposedly done away with permanently by al-Ashraf Shaʿbān in his edict of 766/1365—began to appear once again. After the death of the Mamlūk Sultan al-Malik al-Mu'ayyad Shaykh in Muḥarram 824/January 1421, his son and successor, al-Malik al-Muẓaffar Aḥmad, wrote to the amir of Mecca informing him of his succession and ordering him to repeal the *mukūs* that had been re-enacted.[72] Sultan Aḥmad's reign came to an abrupt end in the month of Shaʿbān/August of the same year when he was displaced by al-Malik al-Ẓāhir Ṭaṭar, who almost immediately issued a decree abolishing the taxes levied on fruit, vegetables, cereal grains and other foodstuffs in the markets of Mecca. This edict, copies of which were carved on a number of columns in the Great Mosque at Mecca, also ordained an annual stipend of one thousand gold dinars for the Grand Sharif of Mecca, to be despatched to the Hijaz from the Mamlūk treasury in Cairo.[73]

The revenue from the *mukūs* collected in Jedda continued to outstrip all other sources of revenue for the amir of Mecca. A gross error of judgement on the part of Ḥasan b. ʿAjlān in 825/1422, however, was to culminate three years later in the total loss of these receipts. To understand this development, it must be borne in mind that the vessels of the India trade only travelled as far as Aden—then under the control of the Rasūlids—where their cargoes were transferred to other craft more suitable for the navigation of the Red Sea. The Rasūlids levied customs duties on this trade and, when the amounts exacted increased dramatically during the reign of al-Malik al-Nāṣir Aḥmad, merchants began to search for an alternative. So in 825/1422, a *nākhudā*, or ship's captain known to us only as Ibrāhīm, set out from his home port of Calicut on India's Malabar coast for the Arabian Peninsula. Bypassing Aden, he entered the Red Sea and docked at Jedda, where the amir of Mecca quickly confiscated all the merchandise he carried. As a result, the captain searched for alternative ports on the Red Sea coast of Arabia when he returned the following year, but he met with a similar treatment in both Sawākin and Dahlak. Nevertheless, the *nākhudā* Ibrāhīm returned to the Red Sea in 827/1424, by which time Mecca itself had become effectively incorporated into the Mamlūk Kingdom with the stationing of a garrison of *mamlūk* horsemen there under the command of the amir Qurqumās. Qurqumās seized the opportunity and persuaded Ibrāhīm to unload his cargo at Jedda, where he was given an exemplary treatment.[74] At the same time, the *mamlūk* amir Yashbak al-Sāqī was attempting to persuade Sultan Barsbāy to assert his authority over Jedda as well. Yashbak had been exiled to Mecca by Sultan al-Malik al-Mu'ayyad Shaykh and during his period of residence in the holy city, had ample opportunities to analyse the strengths and weaknesses of sharifian rule, and especially to witness the increasingly large sums of money being collected

[70] al-Fāsī, *ʿIqd*, IV, 136; ʿUmar b. Fahd, *Itḥāf*, III, 565. The *iflūrī* is the Venetian ducat, worth about 54 Masʿūdī dirhams at this time, cf. Mortel, 'Prices', 301.

[71] al-Fāsī, *ʿIqd*, IV, 136–7; ʿUmar b. Fahd, *Itḥāf*, III, 571.

[72] al-Fāsī, *ʿIqd*, IV, 141; ʿUmar b. Fahd, *Itḥāf*, III, 579.

[73] al-Fāsī, *ʿIqd*, IV, 142; ʿUmar b. Fahd, *Itḥāf*, III, 581; Qutb al-Dīn al-Nahrawālī, *al-ʿIlām fī aʿlām Bayt Allāh al-Ḥarām* (Cairo, 1304 A.H.), 138.

[74] al-Fāsī, *ʿIqd*, IV, 145, 148; al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk*, IV, 681, 881; cf. also Subhi Y. Labib, *Handelsgeschichte Ägyptens in Spätmittelalter* (Wiesbaden, 1965), 378; Heyd, *Histoire*, II, 445–6; Darrag, *Barsbay*, 200; Yūsuf Faḍl Ḥasan, *The Arabs and the Sudan* (Khartoum, 1973), 80–1.

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in Jedda on behalf of the Sharif Ḥasan b. 'Ajlān. Once returned to Cairo, Yashbak sought to persuade Barsbāy to expropriate the income from the port for himself.[75] Perpetually in need of liquid capital, the sultan was not hard to convince. In 828/1425, he appointed a clerk of his administration, Sa'd al-Dīn Ibrāhīm b. al-Mara, as his agent (*nā'ib* or *nāẓir*) in Jedda. From that time forward, and until the end of the Mamlūk era, the holder of this office would travel to Jedda every year, collect the *mukūs*, fixed at one-tenth of the value of the merchandise involved, and bring the proceeds back with him to Cairo.[76]

The value of the revenues collected by the Mamlūk deputy in Jedda was truly impressive. Annual receipts varied from 70,000 dinars during the reign of Barsbāy[77] to 200,000 dinars per annum forty years later.[78] Ḥasan b. 'Ajlān was powerless to prevent the sudden loss of his most important source of income, and the sources are silent regarding his reaction to what must have appeared to him as a catastrophe of the most severe sort.

After having lost both the independence of his amirate and the source of his wealth, Ḥasan b. 'Ajlān died a broken man in 829/1426, and was succeeded by his son Barakāt. Immediately after his father's death, Barakāt travelled to Cairo where Sultan Barsbāy formally invested him with the amirate of Mecca, in return for Barakāt's pledge not to interfere with the collection of the customs duties in Jedda by the sultan's representatives.[79] If the new amir of Mecca passively acquiesced to the new arrangements in the Hijaz, other elements in Meccan society refused to do so without a struggle. Before the Mamlūk expropriation of the *mukūs* in Jedda, Ḥasan b. 'Ajlān had distributed a percentage of the receipts among his closest clansmen, the Banū 'Ajlān. In Shawwāl 831/July–August 1428, the Banū 'Ajlān demanded a share in these revenues from the sultan's agents in Jedda, who successfully resisted their demands, and were soon thereafter reinforced by a contingent of 50 *mamlūk* horsemen sent from Cairo 'to protect (the sultan's) monies'.[80]

Perhaps it was the appearance of sharifian resistance in the amirate of Mecca that prompted Barsbāy to make over one-third of the duties collected in Jedda from the India trade to the Sharif Barakāt in 832/1428–29.[81] Duties levied on goods arriving in Jedda from Egypt, the Yemen and Berber were, on the other hand, collected totally on behalf of the sharif. A tax was also levied on merchandise shipped from Jedda to India, including brass, cloth and coral, one-third of which was designated for the amir of Mecca and the remaining two-thirds for the Mamlūk sultan.[82]

Then, in 840/1436–37, Barsbāy increased Barakāt b. Ḥasan b. 'Ajlān's share of the taxes collected from the India merchants from one-third to one-half.[83] Barsbāy's successor, Jaqmaq, issued a decree in 843/1439–40, according to which the amir of Mecca's share in the *mukūs* collected in Jedda from the India trade was slashed to one-quarter of the total receipts. At the same time, Jaqmaq expropriated 75 per cent of the revenues collected on merchandise

[75] Ibn Taghrī Birdī, *Nujūm*, XIV, 251–2.
[76] al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk*, IV, 680–1, 707–8; Bahā'l-Dīn Muḥammad b. Luṭf Allāh al-Khālidī, *al-Maqṣad al-rafī' al-mansha' al-hādī li-ṣinā'at al-inshā'*, MS Cairo: Dār al-Kutub al-Miṣriyya, no. 21031 *zayn*, I, ff. 154a–b; 'Umar b. Fahd, *Itḥāf*, III, 620–2; cf. also Labib, *Handelsgeschichte*, 380.
[77] al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk*, IV, 707–8.
[78] Ghars al-Dīn Khalīl b. Shāhīn al-Ẓāhirī, *Zubdat kashf al-mamālik wa bayān al-ṭuruq wa'l-masālik* (Paris, 1891), 14.
[79] al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk*, IV, 723; 'Umar b. Fahd, *Itḥāf*, III, 632.
[80] al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk*, IV, 781; Ibn Ḥajar, *Inbā'*, III, 404.
[81] 'Umar b. Fahd, *Itḥāf*, IV, 31.
[82] al-Khālidī, *Maqṣad*, I, f. 154b.
[83] 'Umar b. Fahd, *Itḥāf*, IV, 101.

arriving in Jedda from all other sources.[84] As a consequence, the sharif's income from the customs duties was reduced to its lowest level since the Mamlūk takeover of Jedda in 828/1425.

Shortly thereafter, Sultan Jaqmaq demanded a substantial cash payment from Barakāt b. Ḥasan in return for continued Mamlūk recognition of his nominal authority in the amirate of Mecca.[85] Barakāt, for his part, procrastinated, and the sultan summoned him to appear before him in Cairo. Sensing the threat of his imminent removal from office, Barakāt refused, but was eventually replaced as amir of Mecca by his brother ʿAlī late in 845/1441.[86] Barakāt fled south to the Yemen, collected a small force of loyal supporters, and marched on Jedda in 841/1442–43,[87] in what should be seen as an attempt to reassert sharifian control over the port. He succeeded in capturing the town, and immediately announced his intentions by assembling the merchants and the captains of the India ships present in Jedda and demanding the payment of 4,000 dinars per vessel docked in the harbour. The merchants refused, arguing that the vessels concerned were of different sizes; the smallest ones did not carry cargo worth more than 500 dinars. Instead, they offered to give him one-half of the duty customarily levied on their cargoes, or approximately 40,000 dinars. Barakāt, however, insisted on a minimum payment of 100,000 dinars,[88] a figure which provides eloquent testimony regarding the volume of the transit trade in Jedda. It is unclear whether Barakāt actually received any payment from the merchants, as he soon fled from Jedda when he became aware of the approach of his brother ʿAlī at the head of a substantial military force.[89]

ʿAlī b. Ḥasan b. ʿAjlān—Barakāt's replacement as Grand Sharif of Mecca—was himself replaced by their brother Abū ʾl-Qāsim in 842/1442. In the following year, Barakāt, sensing the weakness of Abū ʾl-Qāsim's position in Mecca and the strength of his own following, and suffering from an acute shortage of financial resources, decided to put pressure on his brother by establishing a camp in Wādī Liyya, near Ṭāʾif. Abū ʾl-Qāsim soon realized the precariousness of his position, and granted Barakāt a large share in the income of the amirate, derived primarily from taxation. Thus, Barakāt was given the annual *maks*—800 *iflūrīs*—paid by the inhabitants of al-Wādiyayn in the Yemen, in addition to the 1700 *iflūrīs* paid each year by the Hijazi tribes.[90] The value of these revenues certainly merits comparison with the size of the *mukūs* being collected in Jedda, and illustrates the relative poverty to which the sharifs had been reduced subsequent to the Mamlūk takeover of Jedda.

Barakāt was not satisfied with the income allotted to him by his brother, the amir of Mecca, and began to foment rebellion among Abū ʾl-Qāsim's tribal followers. As the position of the amir of Mecca began to deteriorate, the Meccan *ʿulamāʾ* intervened and a truce was arranged between Barakāt and Abū ʾl-Qāsim in 848/1444–45. According to the provisions of this agreement, Abū ʾl-Qāsim granted his brother one-third of the amir of Mecca's share of the taxes levied in Jedda.[91] Two years later, Barakāt was restored to his former

[84] ibid., IV, 143.
[85] al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk*, IV, 1211.
[86] Ibn Taghrī Birdī, *Nujūm*, XV, 349.
[87] Ibn Taghrī Birdī, *Manhal*, I, f. 334a.
[88] ʿUmar b. Fahd, *Itḥāf*, IV, 179–80.
[89] Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Sakhāwī, *al-Tibr al-masbūk fī dhayl al-Sulūk* (Cairo, 1896), 40–1.
[90] ʿUmar b. Fahd *Itḥāf*, IV, 216–17.
[91] ibid., IV, 231.

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position as amir of Mecca, in which he remained until his death in 859/1455, when he was succeeded by his son Muḥammad (859/1455–903/1497).

Although data pertaining to taxation are very scarce for the period from the accession of Muḥammad b. Barakāt until the end of Mamlūk control of the amirate of Mecca in 923/1517, isolated references in contemporary Meccan chronicles do nevertheless enable us to come to some conclusions regarding the general trend of events.

Firstly, despite successive Mamlūk attempts at annulling the *mukūs* collected by the sharifs, primarily on foodstuffs, within the city of Mecca, they were reinstated whenever the sharifs thought it was feasible to do so. Although Sultan Ṭaṭar had abolished such imposts in 824/1421—as we have already observed—Sultan Qā'itbāy issued a decree in Ramaḍān 872/March–April 1468 repealing them once again. The text of this decree was carved on one of the pillars of the Great Mosque in Mecca.[92] Taxes were also levied by Muḥammad b. Barakāt on the Syrian pilgrimage caravan. Qā'itbāy sought to persuade the sharif to abolish them on several occasions—most notably in 887/1482—but without apparent success.[93]

Secondly, Qā'itbāy promulgated a number of royal decrees which effectively reorganized the distribution of the customs duties collected in the port of Jedda. The first of these enactments, dated to Dhū 'l-Qaʿda 881/February–March 1477, reflects the changing circumstances affecting the long-distance sea trade with India. Since 827/1424, the India merchants had avoided the Yemeni port of Aden because of the unfavourable taxation policies enforced there, and carried their merchandise directly from the western Indian ports to Jedda. Mamlūk authorities in Jedda, during the second half of the ninth/fifteenth century, began to increase drastically the rate of taxation on merchandise entering the port from India. Consequently, many of the India merchants began to frequent Aden again, resulting in a decline in the value of the duties collected in Jedda on behalf of the Mamlūk treasury.[94] The Indian merchandise would then be shipped onward to Jedda on local vessels, and additional customs duties would be collected there, this time on behalf of the amir of Mecca. Qā'itbāy's decree stipulated that, henceforth, the tax revenues collected on merchandise of Indian origin arriving in Jedda by way of the Yemen would be divided equally between the sharif of Mecca and the Mamlūk treasury.[95] Five years later, Qā'itbāy, for reasons which are unclear, restored these particular revenues *in toto* to Muḥammad b. Barakāt.[96]

During the next decade, fewer and fewer merchants continued to make the long sea voyage directly from India to Jedda; the majority travelled only as far as Aden, where the Indian merchandise was trans-shipped to onward locations, including Jedda. As a direct result of this trend, the Mamlūk sultan's share in the revenues collected in Jedda continued to decrease, at a time when the Mamlūk Kingdom was experiencing severe financial difficulties. On the other hand, the *mukūs* levied on behalf of the sharif of Mecca increased, as more and more goods of the India trade arrived in Jedda by way of Aden. Therefore, in 895/1489–90, Qā'itbāy reversed his edict of 886/1481, and ordered

[92] ibid., IV, 483.
[93] ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz b. ʿUmar b. Fahd, *Bulūgh al-qirā bi-dhayl Ithāf al-warā bi-akhbār Umm al-Qurā*, MS Riyadh: King Saud University Libraries, no. *fa* 73/1, f. 10b.
[94] ʿAbd al-Karīm b. Muḥammad al-Nīmdahī, *Kanz al-maʿānī fī'l-inshā'*, MS Istanbul: Reis ül-Küttap Mustafa Efendi, no. 884, f. 203b.
[95] ʿUmar b. Fahd, *Ithāf*, IV, 603–4; al-Jazīrī, *Durar*, I, 755. Although Sultan Jaqmaq had ordered in 843/1439–40 that 75 per cent of the duties collected on such merchandise be sent to Cairo, it appears that his decree was subsequently revoked.
[96] ʿUmar b. Fahd, *Ithāf*, IV, 654; al-Jazīrī, *Durar*, I, 758.

that henceforward one-half of all the duties imposed on such merchandise be despatched to Cairo.[97] This was then reinforced by another royal decree in 898/1493.[98] Finally, in 899/1494, Qā'itbāy ordered that all the duties levied in Jedda on Indian merchandise arriving via the Yemen be sent to Cairo,[99] a decision which serves to illustrate the rise in the importance of Aden in the international trade of the times at the expense of Jedda. During the following two decades, Jedda suffered an even more precipitous decline. Qā'itbāy's decree of 899/1494 is the last piece of data that can be gleaned from the available sources regarding taxation in the amirate of Mecca until the fall of the Mamlūk Kingdom. The sharifs of Mecca had been totally deprived of what had been—exactly one century before—the major source of their income.

[97] 'Abd al-'Azīz b. Fahd, *Bulūgh*, f. 53a.
[98] ibid., ff. 71a, 72b.
[99] ibid., f. 76b.